MONTEREY NEWS

March 2011
VOLUME XLI · Number 3

The Town

by Sue Protheroe & Will Marsh

Special Town Meeting

The Select Board signed the warrant for the special town meeting on March 3, 2011, at 7 pm at the Monterey Firehouse. The only article on the warrant is to see if the town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to establish and maintain a municipal lighting plant, which would allow Monterey to join the WiredWest public cooperative that is working to build a municipal, last-mile, fiber-optic network in Western Massachusetts. To go into effect, the article must be approved by a two-thirds vote at two town meetings, of which the March 3rd meeting is the first. The vote will be taken by ballot. For the complete wording of the article and a discussion of the issue, including why a municipal lighting plant is needed, see the article on p. 5.

The Dog Park

Robert Lazzarini, chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) met with the Select Board to discuss the issue of the dog park at the community center, the former Wilson-McLaughlin property. At the May 2010 annual town meeting, $10,500 was allocated to construct a dog park at the community center, but the issue became complicated later when Building Commissioner Donald Torrico (who is the

Steve Graves

Sunday morning hockey: the traditional Monterey Sunday morning hockey games have been played for over twenty years.

Zoning Enforcement Officer) and others pointed out that the use of the property as a community center had required a special permit from the ZBA, which was granted in 2009; however the wording of that permit allowed use only as a community center and community garden. Since a dog park was not one of the allowed uses specifically allowed by that permit, another special permit seems to be required or the wording of the 2009 permit needs to be changed. The Wilson-McLaughlin House Committee, which is spearheading the community center, felt that the dog park fell within the definition of a community-center-type use and is in favor of a dog park on the property. When the request for a second special permit came before the ZBA in January, they decided (by a 3 to 1 vote) that the dog park use was a matter of right since no structure would be required, and therefore it did not need a special permit and the ZBA had no jurisdiction.

At the February 7th meeting with the Select Board, Lazzarini said that the 2009 application submitted to the ZBA for the community center had presented a real problem for the ZBA. While everyone was in favor the center, they didn't like the idea of offering anyone carte blanche under the municipal and town building use. Therefore, the condition was made to exclude uses other than a community center and community garden to protect the neighborhood, and to limit where on the property activities could be conducted.

Although the ZBA has decided the dog park is a by-right use, the Building Commissioner and Town Counsel Jeremiah Pollard still feel that the 2009 permit needs to be amended to protect the town. The Select Board can and will request the ZBA to amend special permit #10-01 to add recreational uses by right to the accepted uses or, alternatively, to remove the wording "no other municipal uses allowed". This will allow abutters the chance to voice their opinions on allowing the dog park use, since noise and lights, if installed, might be a concern. The Select Board will then be charged with regulating the dog park, because the Park Commission does not want to take on that responsibility. The Select Board is awaiting the proper wording from Town Counsel before proceeding. The Board has been advised that if they feel that they cannot responsibly enforce the regulations, the dog park doesn't have to be built even if the money has been allocated.

The issue is further complicated by the fact that an existing town bylaw prohibits dogs from public parks. That bylaw would have to be changed at a town meeting.

Community Center Driveway

Members of the Wilson McLaughlin House Committee met with the Select Board to discuss the proposed future driveway. Although it was previously decided that the driveway would come off Route 23, there continues to be a lot of discussion around town about the best location, so the WMH Committee suggested that a committee be formed, separate from the Select Board, to determine the best placement of the driveway, with consideration given to the master plan and the future of the property. Even though some townspeople feel that a Route 23 entrance is unsafe, the WMH Committee feels that is the best location, since visibility problems exist with the current New Marlborough Road intersection. The decision was made to have the Select Board contact the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to request that their traffic engineers make a determination in this matter. Director of Operations Maynard Forbes will be asked to provide firmer cost estimates for the possible driveway locations.

Installing a well on the property for use by the community center, including the community garden, is being considered. The existing account with the town water company does not allow use on the garden, and the quantity available would in any case likely be inadequate for the community center.

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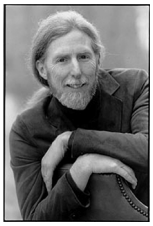

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Financial Matters

Dan Moriarty, Stan Ross, and Michael Storch of the Finance Committee have been attending Select Board meetings to finalize the 2012 budget to be voted on at May annual town meeting. In the proposed budget at this stage, General Government is going up $4500; Protection, Persons and Property is up $14,000; Education is up $9,500; Public Works and Facilities is up $3,300; Human Service is down $300; Culture & Recreation is up $6,500; and Misc. Expenses is up $16,400. Special Articles right now total $326,440. The Finance Committee have voted 2 to 1 against giving any raises, merit or COLA, except for the Board of Assessors clerk, who will be doing much more work because it is a revaluation year. The Select Board will discuss raises once the budget sheets have been updated.

The anticipation is that while most costs have gone up, using the Stabilization Fund may be a possibility to avoid a tax hike.

Insurance for the town and town employees continue to be high-cost items. The Finance Committee is reviewing MIIA's renewal proposal for the town's liability and workman's compensation coverages, as well as a proposal from Wheeler and Taylor that appears to be identical coverage to what we currently have but at a savings of approximately $10,000.

(*continued on p. 4*)

Belinda Twing

Kindergarten on Ice

The Monterey School has once again returned to the ice. Thanks to Mrs. Kelly Milan (standing at left in photo), our gym teacher, and the help of Mari Enoch, the mother of Joseph Enoch, a student in our class, we were able to transport our students to the Monterey skating rink. Our students have been going ice-skating every Friday for one hour since the beginning of January. Some of our students have never been on the ice, while others have been skating circles around us. We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful community. Mark Makuc, one of the Monterey firemen, has been making sure the heating room is always ready when we arrive. We would also like to thank the parents who have joined us on the ice every now and then. If anyone in the area has any children's ice skates they would like donate to our class, we could always use extras. Three of our students were not in the picture. Lynn Webster, the Monterey School teacher is kneeling in center.

— Belinda Twing

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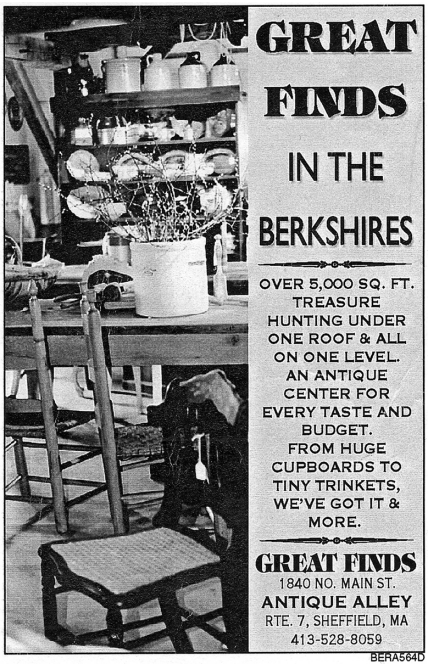
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(*Town, cont. from p. 3*)

The Select Board and the Finance Committee reviewed what other neighboring towns do compared to Monterey in how health and dental insurance costs are split between the town and the employees. Monterey and Otis do not offer dental; Tyringham, Sheffield, Stockbridge, New Marlborough, Egremont, and Richmond do. The employee/town contributions to health insurance are as follows: 90/10 in Monterey; 75/25 for Tyringham, Sheffield, Otis, and Stockbridge; 65/35 in New Marlborough, 86/14 for existing employees and 75/25 for new employees in Egremont; and 80/20 in Richmond. The Finance Committee and the Select Board all agreed not to change the contribution split since raises were probably not being given.

Highways and Operations

A snow emergency may be called because the town is going over its salt and sand budget. Director of Operations Maynard Forbes reported the following recent activity:

- Raked roofs, Bally Gally & Town Hall.
- Plowing edges of roads, resalting, sanding.
- Changed blades on Kenworth.
- 4500 sent to dealership for repairs.
- Load cover repaired on Oshkosh.
- Logging operation problems, Harmon Road.
- Checked Town Hall heat.
- Applied for MEMA assistance with January 11th and 12th snowstorms.

Police Matters

Police Chief Gareth Backhaus reported the following activities:

- Complaint received on Laurel Banks of neighbors plowing snow into their driveway. This is a private way, so they need to talk to the homeowners' association.
- Responded to a problem with a no-trespass order.
- Assisted with a disabled motor vehicle.
- Assisted citizen with snow removal on a roof in danger of collapsing.
- Automobile rear bumper found on Tyringham Road.
- Assisted with a missing person complaint; person had returned when police arrived.
- Motor vehicle accidents, Pixley/ West Road, Sandisfield Road.
- Investigated suspicious activity reported on Blue Hill Road; complaint unfounded.
- House check, Hupi Road.
- Assisted with complaint of leaking gas smell.
- Cars parked on Art School Road, blocking town plows.
- Medical call, Wellman Road.
- Abandoned 911 call, Brett Road.
- Nineteen traffic stops.
- Vehicle needed towing on Tyringham Road.
- Traffic control; oil truck broke down on Main Road.
- Tractor trailer tried to go up Harmon Road to log—tractor trailers are not allowed on Harmon Road, and the driver had no permit to log.
- Lockout at the transfer station.
- False alarm, Fairview Road.

This and That

The Select Board appointed Jonathan Levin as an alternate on the Zoning Board of Appeals, until the May town election.

Dr. Pat Salamon was appointed to a two-year term on the Cultural Council.

The Select Board agreed to continue Monterey's participation in the Southern Berkshire Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program.

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Special Town Meeting March 3 to Enable Town-Wide High-Speed Internet Access

A special town meeting will be held on Thursday, March 3, at 7 pm, at the Monterey Firehouse to ask the town to support WiredWest, the community-driven organization working to build a municipal, last-mile, fiber-optic network in Western Massachusetts. At 6:15 pm, prior to the 7 pm meeting, a short video on WiredWest will be shown, followed by an opportunity for questions.

The warrant article is asking Monterey to form a Municipal Lighting Plant (MLP) department. If passed with a two-thirds majority vote of voters present, at two town meetings, two to thirteen months apart, this step allows our town to join the WiredWest Cooperative, which will undertake the capitalization, build-out, and operation of a municipal fiber-optic network in participating MLP towns. This is Monterey's first of two meetings to vote on the MLP.

Warrant Article Wording

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take all necessary and appropriate action to establish and to maintain, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 164 of the General Laws and in accordance with the rules, regulations and orders of the Department of Public Utilities and the Department of Telecommunications & Cable, a municipal lighting plant for all purposes allowable under the laws of the Commonwealth, including without limitation the operation of a telecommunications system and any related services, or to take any other action relative thereto.

What is MLP Legislation?

Municipal Light Plant legislation is Chapter 164 of Massachusetts General Laws and was initially created over one hundred years ago to enable towns to form their own electric departments. In the 1950s, community television was added to the legislation, and in the 1990s the legislation was amended so towns could also engage in the provision of telecommunications services. Currently about forty towns have operating MLP departments in the Commonwealth.

Why is this the best option?

WiredWest, comprised of representatives from forty-seven western Massachusetts towens, conducted extensive research on what type of governance structure would best accomplish the mission and serve the needs of participating towns. The research was guided by local municipal counsel, project counsel, regional planning experts, and a national community broadband consultant, and resulted in a recommendation to create a public cooperative comprised of member Municipal Light Plant (MLP) towns. The MLP option was advantageous for a number of reasons, particularly the expediency of using existing state legislation specific for our purpose (providing telecommunications services). Trying to get special legislation for the project would be time-consuming and expensive, with no guarantee of success.

What is the town's role?

The Select Board can choose to oversee its MLP department themselves or appoint a three-to-five-member volunteer board. This group is responsible for appointing a manager, making decisions around the town's participation and representation in the WiredWest Cooperative (WWC), and filing annually with the Commonwealth.

Creating the MLP incurs no cost to the town. There does not need to be a town "plant," nor does the town need to engage in the provision of electricity.

If a town joins the WWC, there will be a membership fee of not more than $1,000 per town. Participation in the WWC is voluntary, but a town's decision to leave the WWC after the point of project

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financing will be determined by the type and terms of the financing.

Why create a Monterey MLP?

Creating an MLP department is the first step in joining a public cooperative that will enable the capitalization, build-out, and operation of a long-lived community-owned-and-operated network that serves all, is affordable, and will drive economic development for decades to come.

Many of us have no access to high-speed internet at home, including those of us trying to run home-based businesses. Our region's lack of universal access puts our citizens and businesses at a disadvantage in much the same way that our rural predecessors who couldn't get electricity were held back. We miss out on employment and business opportunities, businesses and students cannot compete on a level playing field, and healthcare providers, schools, local governments and the citizens they serve cannot reap the cost savings and improved services enabled by a robust, universal, high-bandwidth fiber-optic network.

Fiber-optic cable transports information over a line the width of a human hair. It is vastly superior to any other communications technology because of its enormous capacity for data and the extraordinary speed at which it's transmitted, at the speed of light. One piece of fiber-optic cable can handle all the phone traffic in the United States simultaneously and could transport the entire Library of Congress across the country in thirty seconds.

For those just yearning for a last-generation technology like DSL, it may be hard to imagine why we need all that speed and capacity. The reality is that modern applications and the burgeoning use of high-definition and streaming video have put an enormous strain on our existing telecom infrastructure and made it difficult for high-bandwidth users, including businesses, schools, and healthcare providers, to conduct operations and provide service effectively over last generation technologies. So we have the problem of both insufficient access and the problem of inadequate technologies where access is available.

The most efficient and effective way to address both of these issues is to build a state-of-the-art infrastructure that will accommodate the existing needs of high-bandwidth users, and the future needs of all users. Just as it wouldn't make sense to build a highway based on past traffic volumes, it's not good policy to create a telecommunications infrastructure that will become obsolete in a few years.

WiredWest is about a year into planning for such a network, with the goal of building and operating a municipal, last-mile, fiber-optic network in western Massachusetts towns and creating a long-lived asset that will drive regional economic growth and quality of life for years to come. If you are interested in more information on WiredWest, you can visit the website at www.wiredwest.net. There is also a Facebook page and Linkedin group.

— Monica Webb

Planning Board Working on Wireless Bylaw

The Planning Board continues work on Monterey's bylaw governing wireless telecommunications, personal wireless services facilities, towers, and repeaters. At the public hearing held on January 25, a standing-room-only crowd reviewed the proposed bylaw revisions and asked many questions. The input and interest generated by the public hearing has initiated conversations with constituents at our recent Planning Board meetings, specifically the February 10th and February 24th meetings.

The most significant change to the current telecommunications bylaw, which was crafted in 1998, is the proposal to expand the wireless telecommunications overlay district (bylaw language for where you can site cell towers) from the summit of Mount Wilcox to include the entire town of Monterey. The current bylaw allows cell towers to be sited solely on Mount Wilcox, which is in Monterey, and also on state land in Beartown State Forest. The Planning Board has been informed by representatives from cell tower companies

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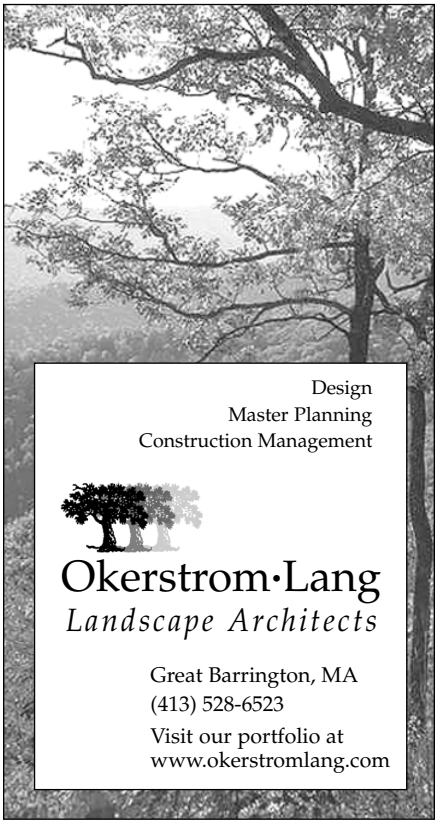

that the Mount Wilcox location is not workable due to the remote location and that the topography is not conducive (I believe it's that the hill is too broad and round for the signal to travel properly). According to an email communication from Lou Demas, the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Radio Consultant, the DCR issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) five years ago for all of Western Massachusetts and no carrier had any interest in the Mount Wilcox location.

An active and vocal constituency that opposes many of the changes proposed in the telecommunications bylaw revision has attended Planning Board meetings since the January 25th public hearing. Citizens Nancy Marcus, Kate Ryan, and Sandra Chianfoni have met with the board and made a list of requests for changes. Specifically, and at a minimum, they would like for the proposed setback for towers from residences, currently proposed for 600 feet, to be increased to 1500 feet. In addition to the noise, the nuisance factor, and the visual blight associated with the towers, these citizens believe that there are negative health effects from the electromagnetic radiation (EMR) associated with the antennas. During a discussion at our February 10th Planning Board meeting, Adam Goodman, a Monterey resident who has worked in the wireless telecommunications industry, remarked that if there are emissions in excess of FCC (Federal Communications Commission) standards then a complaint may be filed with the FCC. Goodman said that the FCC is very sensitive to this issue and they respond quickly to any such allegations and check out the antennas to see if there are excess emissions. However, some regard the FCC limits as insufficient to protect human health, particularly that of children. Regarding Planning Board jurisdiction in this regard, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 prohibits regulating the placement of communications facilities (towers) on the basis of the health effects of electromagnetic fields if the facilities meet the FCC standards for emissions.

In addition to the aforementioned concerned citizens, the Planning Board met at the February 24th meeting with Colleen Johnson, a Monterey homeowner, who stated that her home is within sight distance of four telephone poles. At a prior residence (not in Massachusetts), Johnson observed that Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS) were installed on the phone poles in the public right of way and the public had no notice about the installation and no recourse to those events. Johnson requested that the board make sure that there are regulations in the bylaw that govern the use of the public right of way. Board member Stephen Enoch stated that the proposed bylaw requires that a special permit be obtained in order to install repeaters and that the special permit process requires the notification of abutters. There was also discussion about the distinctions between repeaters, DAS, antennas, and transmitters and if these terms are interchangeable or if there are technological differences to be addressed.

Kate Ryan requested that the board seek legal counsel, either Town Counsel or the Attorney General, to see if the current bylaw is really not viable from a legal standpoint. Other issues that were discussed were two-year master plans with antenna layouts, information on cumulative EMR of master plan build-out, defining least intrusive means of tower siting, and requesting that companies provide >

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alternative site options. Citizens Ryan, Marcus, and Johnson strongly advised the Planning Board to consult a lawyer who specializes in land use and also has knowledge of radio frequency technologies to review the bylaw.

Terry Webb also attended the February 24th meeting and was representing his wife, Monica Webb. Monica is co-chair of Wired West a group whose goal is to bring high speed internet via fiber optic lines to rural western Massachusetts (see article on p. 5). Webb presented a list of priorities issued by The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, with high-speed broadband Internet, at number three, as one of the top priorities. At the January 25th public hearing, Monica Webb requested that the Planning Board delete broadband internet providers from the bylaw due to her conviction that local providers of tower-based wireless internet service will preclude citizens from subscribing to the much-hoped-for future fiber optic network. Webb states that fiber optic technology is the ideal standard and she doesn't want what she considers to be a substandard and interim technology to erode a potential subscriber base for fiber optic technology. Planning Board members did not agree that having tower-based Internet technology would be mutually exclusive to having a fiber optic network. In another conversation Monica observed that the only opportunity that a town has to regulate towers is via the zoning bylaw, and that she believes that opening the entire town to tower siting is ill advised.

Since the Planning Board has been inundated with information at our recent meetings, we are limiting time for public input at our next meetings in order to review and discuss the current long list of requested changes. The Planning Board will be sifting through the information to decide what, if any, changes to make to the proposed bylaw revisions. If any changes are made to the revisions the board then needs to decide if they are "substantial changes" that require another public hearing. We will keep you posted on this important issue for our town.

— Maggie Leonard,
Monterey Planning Board

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Thanks to the Chocolate Hearts

Thank you to all those who supported the future Monterey community center by buying chocolate heart pops at the Monterey General store last month. The Friends of the Wilson McLaughlin House are happy that all the chocolates sold and that the public was reminded of our quest. Yes, we are still actively working on making the dream of the future local community center a reality! Special thanks go to Kenn Basler, and his store crew for giving of their space and time, to Catherine's chocolates for selling them to our committee at a wholesale price, and to people who made donations. One sizable donation really boosted up the proceeds of the fundraiser. If you still want to make a contribution it is not too late. You can mail a check to FWMH at PO Box 302, Monterey, MA 01245. Thanks again.

— Mary Makuc, FWMH

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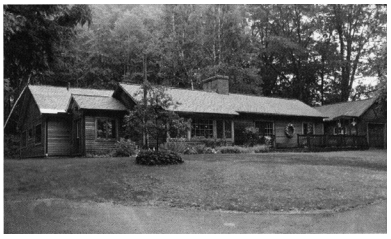

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February Wildlife Report

In the middle of the month the snow was very deep, which resulted in high snowplow banks on all the roads. For the animals, including birds, ground travel presented new magnitudes of challenge for some and advantage for others. Our dog Russell caught his very first squirrel, after five years of trying. His long legs let him run in deep snow, but it was soft and powdery, so the squirrel floundered and was slowed down. It would have been a different story on the crust we have now.

On February 13, Glynis Marsh reports a deer that opted to stay in the road in front of her slow-traveling car, rather than leap up the plow-bank into the deep going in the woods. We had a similar experience here on our dirt road with three long-legged turkeys who finally flew, but did not want to run up the bank and into that snow.

A few days later, February 16, Will Marsh saw a porcupine walking on Tyringham Road beside a high plow-bank. We saw one about that time curled up on the road side of such a bank, apparently unharmed but not making any attempt to escape up the "mountain." Sometimes the usual life-saving behavior works against you because of new circumstances.

Also in mid-month, Valentine's Day, George and Jan Emmons had a flock of robins, fourteen or fifteen, eating the little dried fruits hanging on their pink ornamental crab apple. They'd had one or two robins before. None of their robins were touching the dried fruits of the dark red crab, they report. (Why not? What's the difference?)

Maureen Banner

Hey, I've got an idea—let's all go to the Banners' feeder!

On the 21st, Wellons Kochey of Fairview Road saw a big bobcat, about three feet long and "dark brown/blonde." The cat crossed the road from the state forest side, headed east, and went into a gorge and across the stream there. This was late afternoon.

February 23: Will Marsh reports the return of two turkey vultures high and circling near his place on River Road. They are back early, we think, and it was late when Will reported the last ones still around in the fall, October 29, 2010. Also on February 23 we had a new otter trail, toboggan-style, headed downstream beside (and into and out of) our brook.

The hairy woodpeckers are drumming now, too: it is a close-packed series of "notes" or beats on a hollow tree, so many per second (twenty-six says Donald Kroodsma's *The Backyard Birdsong Guide*, but who can count them?) that it sounds almost like a distant creaking of one branch against another. But it's not.

Thanks for your wildlife sightings. Call me at 528-9385 or email bmca@berkshire.net.

— Bonner McAllester

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March 16th Potluck: Andrew Cort on Finding Meaning

A small but enthusiastic group greeted our February speaker, David Crowe, who illuminated us about the basics of Tai Chi and Qi Gong. He also led us in a group of exercises that were fascinating for their gentle moves and intensity. He may have made some new converts! Thanks very much, David.

For the March 16th Potluck, we are happy to have Dr. Andrew Cort, who had been scheduled for the canceled January Potluck. He is a Tyringham author, chiropracter, attorney, and teacher. He asks "Do you look for higher meaning in life, but can't stand the irrationality and bigotry that religion often fosters?" According to Cort, religious stories were never meant as literal history, morality lessons, or demands for blind faith. They are symbolic allegories filled with psychological and spiritual meaning about the journey from inner slavery to spiritual enlightenment. When this common purpose is understood, the stunning underlying unity of all our traditions is revealed and the major motivation for religious hatred and war disappears.

Come hear Dr. Andrew Cort speak about his new book, *The Purpose of Religion: Enlightenment, Meaning and Love in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Symbology*, at the next Monterey Community Potluck Dinner on March 16 in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse at 6 PM. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil and a place setting and silverware for yourself.

Everyone is welcome.

— Barbara Dahlman and Kyle Pierce

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Republican Caucus Call

Citizens of Monterey, Massachusetts who are qualified voters and members of the Republican Party are hereby requested to meet in caucus in the Monterey Church basement in Monterey, Massachusetts, at 1:30 pm on March 5, 2011, to nominate candidates for the various town offices to be voted for at the annual town meeting on May 7, 2011 at the Monterey Firehouse. The caucus will be held and is called under the provisions of Chapter 53 of General Laws and will be called to order by the Chairman of the Republican Town Committee, Mark Makuc.

The Monterey Town Republican Committee members will have a brief meeting at 1:00 pm, on March 5, just before the Republican Caucus, also in the Monterey Church basement.

Rabies Clinic March 5

A rabies clinic for dogs and cats will be held on Saturday, March 5, from 1 to 2:30 pm at the Monterey Firehouse. The cost will be $10.00 per shot. Dog licenses can be purchased at the clinic. The 2011 Dog Licenses must be obtained by April 1, 2011.

— Linda Thorpe, Town Clerk
528-1443 x113 or 528-5175

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Good Season for Ice Rink

The Monterey ice rink at the Monterey Firehouse pavilion got great use this season, thanks to an almost continual run of subfreezing temperatures. Typically the ice will last about two months, and this year we may squeeze out an extra week or two into March.

The annual skating party filled the pavilion with families, food, fun, and music, thanks to the Monterey Park Commission. The traditional Monterey Sunday morning hockey games continued with participation exceeding twenty-five players during the season. The hockey season of over twenty games brought out teenagers, hockey studs, and seniors of all levels for informal, noncontact recreation. Friday night father/son hockey games along with Saturday morning free hockey clinics introduced the fun and fundamentals of hockey to many area youths. Daytime public skating was crowded with families enjoying the very special facility.

Many thanks to the volunteers, rink snow shovelers, icemakers, and friends of the rink who donated time and equipment. Skates and hockey equipment can be donated anytime of the year at the shelves inside the pavilion. Volunteers are needed to help take down the rink on Saturday, April 9, at 9:30 am.

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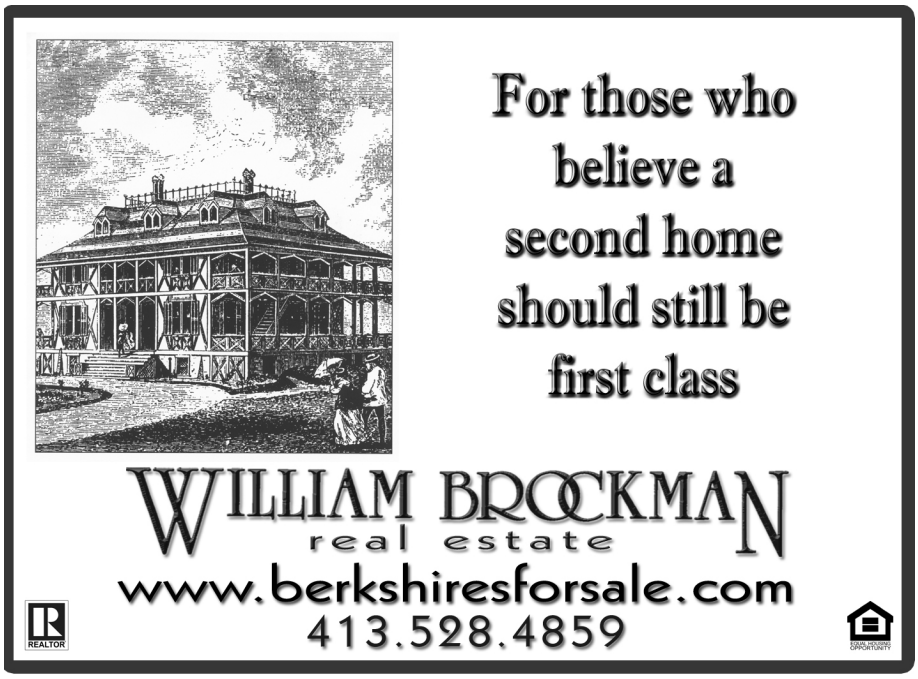

From the Meetinghouse . . .
Singin' Their Own Sweet Song

When you read this, it will be month-old information, but right now it's still the first week in February and this morning I heard birdsong. That used to be a daily thing, but now we don't have a bird feeder. Now winter birdsong is a rare treasure, kind of like oxygen at 10,000 feet. Admittedly, this isn't a front-page-headline item, but birdsong is a joy-bringer and community builder nevertheless. In other words, in Monterey, it's just our kind of thing.

Birds sing their messages in their own languages to their own kind, of course. But when I eavesdrop on their conversations, I hear the sounds through the filter of my happiness. I hear, "We're baaaack," and "No shadow for the groundhog, tra la!" I wonder if that happiness is solely my own, or a resonance the birds and I share.

I wonder: are some members of their species the birds' equivalent of scout bees, the ones who go out from the hive early to explore the current lay of the land and come back to announce their findings to the rest? Are they singing, "Wake up! It's coming! Wake up! It's already here! Wake up!"? Whatever they mean in bird-talk, what I hear in their songs is pretty good news.

It's pretty, good news as well. I wonder if all this warbling springs from some kind of visceral imagination, mine or theirs. Or if some chemical-response mechanism clicks on to say, "It's time!" I wonder, too: doesn't the birds' response to the imminent birth of spring sound just like conditions that trigger the start of the birth process for human babies? I wonder these things rationally, of course, and with an abstract interest in possible answers. But mostly, I wonder like a child, for the sheer joy of standing in the moment of wonder. As an artist, for the joy of watching a crack open in the cosmic egg of expectation to reveal a world rich with unexpected possibility

With birdsong, it's a moment that begins when the sounds are empty of everything except themselves, and continues as long as that emptiness is enough. Sometimes I wonder if every beautiful thing the Buddha said about emptiness, and every glorious, challenging thing Jesus said in those homespun parables, were born in moments of wonder. Moments of awe-full awareness. Moments filled with what we mostly hear as plain, old, mundane birdsong.

I crossed paths with several people today who've also heard birds singing recently, or were glad to know that someone else had. A friend told me she'd just heard the winter-to-spring change in the chickadees' call. And whether you listen to birdsong from somewhere out in the woods, from your own open front door, or, since this is Monterey, from both perches at once, these strands of sound link us together. That's definitely our kind of thing, and there'll be much more of it around by the time this article sees print. And that's definitely great good news, the kind of news that kind of makes me wonder . . .

— Mary Kate Jordan

2011 Baseball Signups For 5-12-Year-Olds

Signups are under way for the South County baseball league (a division of Babe Ruth League). Home games and practices are at beautiful Greene Park in Monterey center on Route 23. The league is open to all players not turning 13 before May 1, 2011, living in Monterey, Otis, Great Barrington, Sandisfield, Becket, New Marlboro, Sheffield, and surrounding towns.

There are no tryouts, everybody learns and plays at their own pace. Five-to-seven- year-olds play one time per week, on Wednesdays, using tennis balls. The AAA 8-10-year-olds teams and 11-12-year-olds Majors team play two to three times per week starting in April and continuing through June. There will be optional postseason and summer baseball activities.

From beginners to all-stars, everybody learns and plays baseball. This is an excellent baseball experience emphasizing fun, friendship, hitting, pitching, catching, action, socialization, and team spirit.

The cost is $40 per player or $70 maximum per family, which covers uniforms, insurance, equipment, etc. Send player's name, address, email address, and birthday by March 31 to Jim Edelman, PO Box 11, Monterey, MA 01245 For more information call Steve Graves at 413-269-4632 or Jim Edelman at 413-528-0006, or email sgraves8@yahoo.com.

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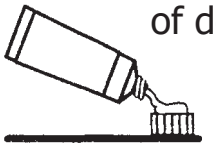

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Route 23 Monterey

"Garden Gustation"

What's Cooking from Monterey Gardens & Farms

Gustation? The *Encarta Dictionary* states: "the action of tasting, or the sense or faculty of taste".

Here's the second installment of what I hope will be a monthly contribution to the *Monterey News*. I hope you will be able to write to me to share your recipes for using what is available to us right now locally, whether in your root cellar, pantry, freezer, or local winter farmers market.

Stephen and I are trying to stay ahead of Mother Nature once again by eating our potatoes before they succumb to the daylight and begin sprouting. Our potato crop was a result of saving some of our seed potatoes from the previous year and purchasing some new from Johnny's Selected Seeds. The varieties we saved are some that we were given from our friend Anne Banks from Earthborn Garden in Hillsdale, New York. All we know about them is that they are delicious. They included yellow, white, and red varieties that all produce well. It was a bit risky saving these as seed potatoes, as our tomatoes were affected by the blight in 2009, and potatoes were also very susceptible. Our potatoes seemed to be fine and kept well. We also purchased some Red Nordland and Yukon Golds from Johnny's.

Our crop this past year did fairly well, but our plants seemed to die out very early

Stephen Moore

and the voles were quite happy to help us out with sampling. Alas, we have had plenty stored in the "food locker" that Stephen built for us in our garage. Our food locker is our root cellar, of sorts. It is an insulated, lightproof, wooden cabinet that can be vented to the outside if the temperature in the unheated garage rises too high due to incoming sunshine. We have kept our potatoes, celeriac, carrots, and beets in this box over the winter.

I am new to celeriac, or celery root. I learned of it from our membership in the Indian Line CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) a few years ago. I learned that it is a wonderful winter keeper and has a delicious mild celery flavor. I make a lot of soups, and I decided that I would use it instead of celery in my recipes. It combines nicely with potatoes too. I have found it to be fairly easy to grow, but the seeds must be started inside in order for there to be enough time for the celeriac to develop. I started them inside in late March. I used a variety called Diamante Celeriac. Throughout the season the tops are a beautiful green and look and smell very much like celery. The large bulbs that form just beneath the soil are quite a sight when harvested. They tend to look like a mass of tangled roots. Beneath this ugly surface is a white fleshed orb that is well worth the trouble.

My recipe for this month is one that I just learned of recently but thought it worthy to share since it included three items we have on hand, potatoes, celeriac, and garlic. The recipe came from Fine Cooking but as is the case with a lot of cooking, I was unable to follow it exactly; it's mashed potatoes after all.

Garlic-Infused Mashed Potatoes and Celery Root (Celeriac)

Underlined ingredients are ours or locally available.

1 bulb celeriac/celery root, peeled and cut into 1 inch pieces
About 5 medium-size potatoes, washed and cut into 1-inch chunks (I don't peel my potatoes but you certainly can.)
About 1 cup High Lawn Farm milk, low fat or whole
5 medium cloves garlic, peeled and cut into slices.
3 Tablespoons butter
Salt and pepper to taste.

In a pot large enough to hold both the potatoes and celeriac with room for mash-

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ing later, add the celeriac pieces with about 4 cups water. Add 1 Tablespoon of salt to the water and bring to a boil. Let cook for 10–15 minutes, then add the potatoes and cook until soft.

While the celeriac is boiling, put the milk into a saucepan along with the sliced garlic. Bring the milk/garlic mixture to a boil. Leave the pan on the burner but turn off the heat and cover. Let sit while the potatoes finish cooking.

Drain the cooked potatoes and celeriac and mash with 3 Tablespoons of butter. I freeze the water from cooking the potatoes and celeriac for soup broth at a later date. Add the infused milk and garlic to the potatoes in small amounts until the consistency preferred. The amount of milk needed will depend on the type of potato used. If there is not enough garlic-infused-milk to obtain the desired consistency, just add more plain milk.

Add salt and pepper to taste. Enjoy!

What did you grow that you are keeping and eating over the winter? Do you have a favorite recipe using Monterey Chevre? What are you doing with all those potatoes? Carrots? Beets? Etc.? I hope to hear from you.

If you sent me something last month, I apologize but my email address was incorrect in the printing. Please try again!

Please email me with your ideas: WENDYGJ@GMAIL.COM

— Wendy G. Jensen

ॐ

Hatchery Vigil

(dedicated to Leroy Thorpe)

"A society grows great when its people grow trees whose shade they shall never sit in."—Greek Proverb

Whatever it is,
that moves a man

to rise early,
believing it matters

to watch
amber crack
over fish tents, and
the heron dive
into dawn.

He kept vigil
to impart,

the sacred
swings
from the hem
of nature

the Hatchery is
more than
Berkshire history
and trout,

its artesian spring,
the hush of seasons –
restored for
generations.

He knew the irony
of time,
that work
we give
is never lost, if

God runs out
after the
Benediction,

and sanctifies
his dream.

— M. Hamilton

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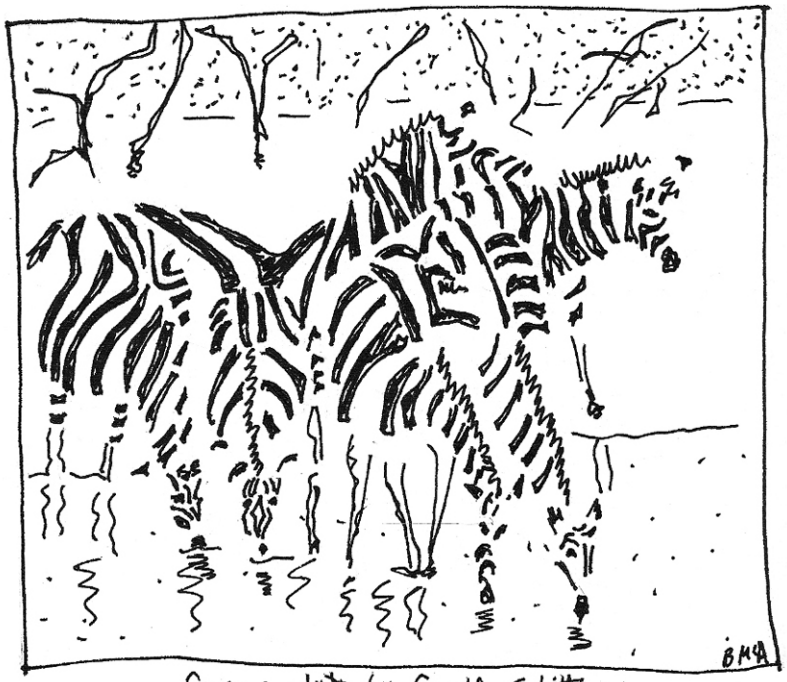
Camo: How Do I Look? How Do I Taste?

Some human animals love to put on the bright colors and some don't. Some days an individual feels and looks all startling, and another day the same person may go for the earth tones, for the blend. What makes a body hop one way today and the other way tomorrow? It's no simple story, as we all know when trying to decide which socks to wear. There's many a factor, from current availability of certain socks to today's wish to match the sweater as opposed to the pants. There are also the day's appointments, the weather forecast, even the day: is it Christmas? Easter? Valentine's Day? Do they have colors? Do I want to stand out or stand in?

The day's look is no simpler to figure out among the other species, but from their point of view at least they don't really have to figure it out. They just go with it. Because their day's look is all about survival, both of the individual and of the species, some oddballs have vanished from the gene pool. That one red rabbit that showed up too well in the tawny grasses will not be passing along those colors to the next generation. The one piebald deer in the woods is unlikely to make it through hunting season to produce piebald babies.



Speaking of hunters, though, didn't they once wear woodsy coats and pants, like what my dad called his "stalking shirt," which was greens and browns like the forest? Dad harked to an earlier time, before it was known that bright orange would not be alarmingly visible to the deer but might keep one stalker from stalking another, or worse. Nowadays, hunters put on camouflage plus orange. The camo creates a certain blendiness with its shades and textures. The orange makes for a longer life, with any luck.

Among the other animals there are all sorts of coloration plans, and some of these do include orange. Those who wear orange are not looking to blend in with a bright orange background, rather to make a statement that is personally lifesaving: anything this color is dangerous! Do not think of eating me or you will get sick maybe die, and not pass along your genes. So says the potato bug, for instance. We used to pick them off by the hundreds and deliver them to our chickens, thinking to contribute potato-type goodness to the egg production. It turns out that "nutritious goodness" is not all that is offered by members of the potato family, and this includes the bugs that eat them. They are bright orange, even their eggs are, making them easy to spot and remove for

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a farmer. But any chicken that tries one potato bug will not try another, as they are awful tasting. Warning number two: You did not notice I was orange? Well, maybe you'll notice this!

In our old Encyclopedia Britannica I found out about a type of protective coloring called disruptive coloration. It made me wonder what I'd have to put on to look so wild that no one would be able to see me. To even know I was there. Then I remembered a little true story from a few months back.

Once an otherwise perfectly normal person walked into a Goodwill Store on a hot day. She was a mild-mannered and friendly sort of person but on this day she was wearing something truly wild, not seen on anyone else in the store or even in the county, I bet. It was a big plastic back brace, fore and aft, from the neck, to below the waist. It was custom-made and form-fitting, as in "bra-cups."

This woman gave friendly greetings, smiles to other members of her species, but oddly, they could not see her. They did not look at her face or reply! They appeared to be utterly confused by her look, her disruptive coloration. No doubt their own protective responses were running a bit like this: "What on earth is THAT? Am I safe, here?" They looked long and hard at the torso of this woman, but seemed not to see *her* at all.

The Britannica gives some fine color plates of animals with disruptive coloration. There is a herd of high-contrast zebras standing at a water hole in a tawny country place. They do not blend in with their surroundings. I think I could tell they were zebras, even without the caption. But if I'd been a lion on the scene, odds are I would have been confused and disrupted because this was a group and would have been close together and moving around, all those thin black stripes against white causing "tension headaches." This is how it works among some bright striped tropical fish, too, which occur in large schools and keep on moving so any predator has not only a headache, but terrible trouble discerning one fish for lunch among all those moving lines.

There are all sorts of looks, movements, behaviors and sounds that make an animal (or a plant, or anything) seem not like it is. Some of those orange critters are not dangerous at all but are copying those that are. Maybe it's like folks who wear camo and orange to math class or a party, hoping to be perceived as a bit more woodsy or huntery than they really are at the moment. I used to wear my major climbing boots to math class when I was in college. People still smiled at me and talked to me—maybe even more than if I'd had on my flip-flops. Or my big blue back brace.

Next time you choose your socks, be careful! All sorts of consequences are possible, different for each background, predator, or season (as in mating season). It's a good idea to pack along several sock options whenever leaving the house.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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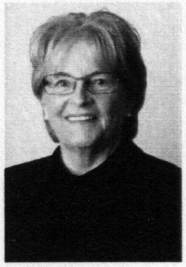

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The Wings at First Light

With the vernal equinox on March 20, the hours of light and darkness, like the wings of a bird, are of equal length. Earth in perfect balance turns on its axis from winter into spring. The moment in time and space arrives with migrations through the heavens.

When I first came to Monterey, the season made a lasting impression on me while I was standing on the bridge at Diane's Trail. There the chilled stillness of the pale blue sky of early spring was broken by the clarion calls of a flock of snow geese, so high overhead as to be uplifting in spirit, as thrilling as the "Hallelujah Chorus" of Handel's immortal *Messiah*!

Now what follows will soon offer other refrains as the sound of music in the hills filters down to the woodlands around the confluence of Rawson Brook and the Konkapot River. Audible everywhere, a refrain of calls of smaller bird rises from males trying to attract mates and also establish turf and territories with their songs. Other species augment vocal sounds with the beat of their wings. The male partridge, for instance, takes to the podium of a fallen log, often arriving before the light of dawn to begin his drum song for the same purpose. He starts by bracing his tail against the log; then, puffing up his breast to ruffle his neck feathers, he opens and closes his wings in a blur of some sixty beats per second, sounding a muffled tattoo. Recently the furtive

sound has been determined to actually be a series of little sonic booms, as air rushes in to fill the vacuum as the wings are thrust outward from the breast.

The partridge is not alone in this exercise of predawn macho exuberance, sharing the exhibit of rapid wing beats with the barnyard rooster when it crows to announce the coming of dawn. The partridge and the rooster are mutually motivated in their audible and visual exhibitions. They also share a literary history dating back to the year 1390 with the publication of mythology about Chanticleer in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. And in several tales both birds similarly outsmart a fox, escaping his clutches by getting him to open his mouth to answer questions. Some of these mythological tales were later put to music for children

Now, many seasons later, I worry that my four grandsons may have already grown up without reading what might be considered to be classics of our day. But I can rejoice that when they did come to visit, I was able to walk them through the Gould Farm barnyard and also show them firsthand a wildlife experience to be found along Diane's Trail. Perhaps when they read this they will also glean some of the miracle that inspires me to draw and write about the arrival of the dawn of spring on "the Wings of First Light. "

— George B. Emmons

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March 10th Lecture on "The Modern Middle East"

Sometimes the way war affects a single institution can provide a lens through which to see the folly of war writ large. Four years after the invasion of Iraq, *Washington Post* reporter Rajiv Chandrasekaran recalled the impact of the U.S. invasion on Baghdad's centuries-old cultural heritage. As he walked through the looted Baghdad Museum, he thought, "We've come here without a plan. It would have taken one tank in front of this building to protect it, yet we didn't do a single thing to stop it. Did we really come into this with no postwar plan?" For Williams College professor Magnus Bernhardsson, the failure on the part of U.S. forces to protect the cultural riches of Iraq was the outcome of both "administrative blunders and the fact that protecting the museum was not seen as a significant priority." The bigger priority, apparently, was to protect the Iraqi oil ministry.

On Thursday, March 10, at 7 pm, Professor Bernhardsson will lecture on "The Modern Middle East" as part of the Berkshire Human Rights Speaker Series. The talk is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire and will take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, located at 270 State Road in Great Barrington.

I had a chance to talk with professor Bernhardsson last month, on the day when President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt finally stepped down after three weeks of demonstrations. The events in Egypt have brought to the surface ugly, often unarticulated stereotypes in U.S. political discourse: *Arabs need strong, authoritarian figures to lead their nations; without Mubarak, there will be chaos*, etc.

"If you ask the average person," Professor Bernhardsson told me, "the first thing they would probably say is that the Middle East is a very unstable region; a place of extreme wealth and poverty, of violence; a place where the women are oppressed and the men are terrorists; and also a place that is very religious, where people behave politically based on their religious emotions. So, therefore the politics in the region are irrational. According to this view, then, the Middle East is a very negative area from which few positive things have ever emerged. That's the prevailing attitude."

And how does this stereotyped view of the region influence U.S. foreign policy?

"Because of these attitudes it's been easy to justify or promote certain policies—including military intervention—in the name of stability. It's encouraged us to support dictators who shore up stability in the region—all because they happen to support the interests of the U.S. government."

Thanks to Wikileaks, our understanding of the region has been turned on its head. The Afghan War Logs provided proof that Pakistani security forces were aiding the same insurgents who were attacking U.S. troops in Afghanistan. (Mind you, these were the same Pakistani forces that for years had received billions in U.S. aid—all to support "stability" in the region.) And the Palestine Papers demolished the claim that Israel has not had a partner in the peace process; leaked State Department cables reveal that Palestinian negotiators were in fact willing to make key concessions to the Israelis.

"On the one hand," according to Professor Bernhardsson, "when these documents were made public, it was not in itself something new. But what it did do was give evidence of what people had been talking about for a long time. It gave credibility to those who had been saying that things were not going as well as certain government officials said they were going.

"Second of all," he continued, "I think it raises the question, 'What should the government keep from its citizens? Is there anything that should not be open and transparent?'"

The U.S. government has chosen not to dwell on the question. Their response to the disclosures has been to harass those who contribute to or support the whistleblower site. For example, prosecutors in the U.S. recently sought access to the private Twitter account of Birgitta Jonsdottir, an Icelandic parliamentarian and Wikileaks supporter.

A native of Iceland, Bernhardsson was in the country when news broke about Jonsdottir. "I'm very surprised that the prosecutors are going this far," he said. "I think that this could be a very dangerous path to go down."

Just as one can learn a lot from the Wikileaks documents, one can also learn a lot from the fact that certain people don't want you to read them.

— Seth Kershner

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March: Thinking Spring

Finally it seems safe to talk about spring. I actually like the drama of big snowstorms, especially in hindsight. It didn't seem fun anymore, however, about one minute before stepping onto the roof with shovel in hand.

So here we are at last in early March. The light is different, stronger, lasting late into the afternoon. The birds' calls are starting to change, and I have to think about how much longer to feed them before the bears want to join the party. Amazingly, the dormant fig tree made it through the dry winter atmosphere by my kitchen table to sprout impossibly green leaves again.

It's almost time to start seeds! To this end I spent several weeks of February with my nose in the seed catalogs trying to envision just the right combination of fruits, flowers, and above all vegetables to cram into my little garden. And I have a few thoughts to share.

My heart still belongs to heirlooms. It starts with their history, at least as much as we know of it. I try to imagine market growers in Danvers, Massachusetts, introducing the Danvers Half Long—it's a short carrot better suited to growing in our dense, rocky New England soils, and it's been ours since the 1870s. Or the people who named the Lazy Housewife snap bean in 1810. Seriously. It was the first stringless snap bean—a timesaver! And then there were the Onion Maidens of Wethersfield, Connecticut, so named because they made a good living growing Red Wethersfield onions starting in the eighteenth century.

Bonner McAllester

Monterey Community Gardeners at the General Store, planning their 2011 plots: (l–r) Kate Basler, Chris Goldfinger, Ruth Green, Carol Ingher, Libby Wolf, Cora Baker.

Even more than their history, it's the astonishing diversity of heirlooms that appeals the most. We live on the edge of another mass extinction of species (lecture coming, take notes), one that humans clearly precipitated and probably have lost control of. But there are these little bright spots, like the efforts people make to maintain genetically diverse cultivated crops in cultures throughout the world. These seed banks may someday be our last defense, should some bug or fungus ruin the majority of our genetically modified and homogeneous food staples like corn or wheat. To be sure, I grow heirlooms because I love their varied tastes, colors, and fragrances. But it helps to know that in the process I can keep Grandma Mary's tomatoes and Sibley's banana squashes going for another year.

The biodiversity of our own region also preoccupies me greatly these days, but that will have to be a story for another day. It's tempting to launch headlong into a discussion right away, but I still don't know how to mix this wish to protect our native flora and fauna into my designs for my clients' gardens. It's harder than you may imagine—how can you tell someone they should choose the plant variety that native insects will happily devour over the non-native plant that is "disease free"? Yet these same insects form the basis of the regional food chain that feeds our native birds and animals, and they have not adapted to dining on non-native plants. Yes the birds will thank you for the effort because otherwise they may not have anything to eat, but what will the garden look like? Using plants that are less vulnerable to insects and disease also

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means it is easier to avoid using harmful pesticides to protect them. The best I can say at this point is that there is no all-or-nothing answer to be found, but the need to modify our planting practices is real. You'll hear about it as I experiment with solutions, that's a fact.

Back to this season's gardens. The snow still hides most of the fence at our Monterey Community Garden, but we are already planning for spring. We have heard from several town residents who want to join the garden this year, and we are taking a good look at how much room we have to expand. If you have an interest in gardening with us in 2011, please let us know soon! You can check out photos of the Community Garden at www.ccmonterey.org, and send us an email through that site.

If you are a beginning gardener or looking to brush up a little on your gardening skills, the Community Garden has just the thing. Join us for a gardening workshop in late April that will introduce you to some useful methods of soil preparation and organic vegetable gardening for beginners. The workshop will be held on a Saturday morning from 9:30 until 12 pm. Please look in the April *Monterey News* for more information.

One more thought for March—someone asked recently if I would answer gardening questions in the *Monterey News*. What do you think? If you have a question about your garden or gardening in general, you can email me at ruthgreen7@verizon.net. If I don't know the answer I promise to point you in the right direction. All emails will be answered (she said bravely), and a few will end up in the *News* each month. Let's give it a try . . .

— Ruth Green

Snowscapes

Cities are not very hospitable or forgiving when it comes to snow. Delicate flakes are instantly liquefied by urban warmth, crushed by vehicular traffic, or succumb to the endless flow of pedestrians. And expect the snow to seek revenge—clogging sewer drains, imprisoning parked cars, reducing traffic to a crawl, and disrupting the pace and patterns of daily living.

Snow properly belongs in the country where, though it may cause problems, it is welcome and largely appreciated for its wholesome whitewash and dramatic makeover of the landscape. And there's no problem of storage, the accumulating snow readily contained within spacious woods and fields.

After fall's splendor has passed, the scene outdoors becomes depressingly drab. Across the land are barren trees, fallen branches, unsightly stumps, ragged stubble, and exposed rock formations. When the snow arrives this all disappears, replaced by an immaculate, seamless white crystalline blanket. Purity and a natural innocence are restored to a landscape grown weary and unkempt. The lifeless terrain now becomes luminous, sparkling playfully under sunlight or moon glow. Wet snow clings stubbornly to the intricate network of tree branches, an abundant cottony tufting creating a visual wonderland. Sunlight streaming through the forest prompts trees and branches to cast ghostlike, undulating shadows on the surrounding snow, this pristine white canvass reflecting the dark structures above. Gusts whip the ground cover into bountiful drifts, creating a succession of elevations and depressions. Winds sculpt these surfaces shearing off sections creating both sharp angular formations along with graceful curvatures.

For a time there is silence. Descending snow muffles sounds, creates no disturbance upon impact with the ground or roof. Vehicles desert the roads, awaiting the return of surer traction. Creatures retreat to shelter and emit few cries though an occasional bird persists in communicating. Sounds return, however, when a thaw brings brooks to life, carrying away freshly melted snow, and when formidably fearsome icicles along with snow packs toppling off roofs come crashing down in a mini avalanche of ice and snow.

In the cities, snow tends to send people indoors to escape the messiness and dangers that are about. By contrast, in the countryside snow lures people outdoors where delights abound and the surrounding beauty elevates the spirits. It attracts those eager to ski, sled, toboggan, snowshoe, or simply build snowmen or propel snowballs. Afterward there are the pleasures of returning indoors—the cozy fire or the comfort of a mug of hot chocolate or steamy soup. The snow has served us well.

— Richard Skolnik

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Deception Begins at Home

The *State of Deception* exhibit is incredible, but even more shocking as a guided tour. The Holocaust Museum carefully chronicles Germany's rise from a World War I defeat in the first half of the twentieth century. Psychologically subtle at first, then with increasing brazenness, the journey begins with posters from 1919 that serve as a call to rebuild the nation. By the late 1920s, Hitler is a dictator and board games exist titled *"Jews Out."* There is the rise of total state control over media, the push to provide a (state) radio for every household, and the focus on schools and the education system to raise a new generation of children that will define Jews as a race — not as followers of a religion. Video clips of old Nazi speeches and interviews with Jewish elders, then just children, give the hallways an eerie sense of what living as a Jew in that time was like.

I did a quick walk-through of this exhibit as part of a museum-hosted roundtable discussion. The museum's education department is hosting a summer event for college students focused on hate speech, the power of propaganda, and civic engagement. I was invited to attend because the Roosevelt Campus Network hosts a summer academy program for a select number of students. Other organizations represented included CBS News, the Democratic National Committee, Georgetown University, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Congressional Black Caucus, to name just a few. The museum staffers wanted feedback on programming, the application process, and potential outcomes. The conference looks like an amazing, and eye-opening, opportunity for students who are in DC for the summer; I hope a few of ours will be in attendance.

The equally disturbing part of *State of Deception*, in my humble opinion, is that you start to question what we overlook today. As a society, are we turning a blind eye to the use of propaganda? How much and to what detriment? Today information is everywhere, but we know that a majority of individuals read only news that reinforces their own beliefs. Public schools that begin the day with the Pledge of Allegiance may not force all students to participate; still there is an ingrained sense of powerful patriotism. Early posters in Nazi Germany did not explicitly advocate the expulsion of Jews: it was implicit that the newly rebuilt state would be only for Aryans. From exclusion to expulsion and extermination, the history of the first half of the twentieth defies logic: how did this happen? It was carefully planned as an insidious play on the human psyche; our nature has dark aspects we try to ignore but wish to indulge anyway. Hitler was an intelligent man, keenly aware and able to manipulate, and our desire to paint him as a crazy individual blinded us to his ultimate designs.

Hate speech on college campuses does exist; even at Middlebury, hate-inspired LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender) graffiti turned up in restrooms across campus. The months after 9/11 witnessed extreme sentiments of distrust and fear-driven hatred toward American Muslims. We as a society, as a democracy, are still prone to hate speech and propaganda; the true test is in our vigilance. In this country, we value free speech and we value our right to say what we think. As inflammatory as some statements may be, many of us realize there is a line between free expression and hate speech. Even more of us realize the distinction between words and actions. The ongoing debates continue for those who do not make that

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connection, or choose not to abide by societal norms. What do we ignore today or push aside as ridiculous that deserves our full attention?

Exhibits that leave you rethinking your own day-to-day life are the ones worth seeing. In my own life, I wonder how I express prejudices, dislike, or disapproval. I cannot help but consider how much certain movies change my levels of tolerance concerning what is actually acceptable. Are my opinions open to change, and am I comfortable with my values set?

Education is the most powerful tool when used to go beyond just imparting information to fostering thinking. In teaching, there is an opportunity to break the cycles of bigotry and hate; there is a chance to encourage curiosity, not fear, toward what we do not know or yet understand. If we can understand historic events in the light of their trajectories of development, then we can more fully apply lessons of history in our own lives. This is what is often missing in textbooks: how peoples' choices decide the course of history, why politics and wars are not the complete picture, and why the dangers of human nature remain surprisingly unchanged over time.

— Tarsi Dunlop

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Mt. Everett Presents *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*

Mt. Everett Regional High School will present the musical *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, the happy and uplifting musical comedy with music and lyrics by Clark Gesner, as their spring musical at the Thomas A. Consolati Performing Arts Center in Sheffield from Thursday, March 17– Sunday, March 20.

Inspired by the Charles M. Schulz comic strip *Peanuts*, which introduced the famous character of Charlie Brown. *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Revised) opened on Broadway in 1999. It is a fresh approach to the 1967 all-time classic. Sally Brown joins Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy, Schroeder and Snoopy in this version. Two new songs, "Beethoven Day" and "My New Philosophy," have been added to the twelve wonderful numbers of the original version, such as "My Blanket and Me," "The Kite," "The Baseball Game," "Little Known Facts," and "Suppertime."

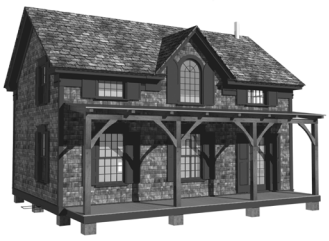
You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown's cast and crew feature over thirty students from the 7th to12th grades. The show is staged and musically directed by Ralph Petillo. This year's show will feature Gabriella Makuc (daughter of Mark and Mary Makuc of Monterey) as rehearsal and performance pianist, the first time in the history of our theatrical programs that a student has been given this enormous responsibility. Gabriella, a junior at Mt. Everett, is worthy of this honor.

courtesy Fran & Dean Amidon

Gabriella Makuc, Veterans Day 2010

The Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening performances are at 7:30 pm, and the Saturday and Sunday afternoon matinee's are at 2 pm. General admission tickets are $8.00. Tickets for students and seniors are $6.00. There will be a brief intermission during which concession items will be available.

We will also be a holding a silent auction through the run of the show. All ticket sales and proceeds from the silent auction and raffle will benefit the Southern Berkshire Regional School District's Arts Programming. Tickets for the performance will go on sale Monday, March 8, and can be purchased in advance by calling 413-229-8754 ext. 127, or at the performances. For more information call the same number.



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Grants Awarded to Local Health Organizations

State Representative "Smitty" Pignatelli (D-Lenox) has announced that two local organizations have been awarded grants by the Massachusetts Dental Society Foundation. The two recipients, Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires, Inc., and Community Health Programs, Inc., are among six organizations that were recently awarded money to improve the oral health of Massachusetts residents. Volunteers in Medicine received $20,000 and Community Health Programs received $25,000.

Both organizations plan to use the funds to hire full- or part-time dental hygienists and help expand their current capabilities to meet the growing need for comprehensive oral care. Demand for these services continues to be very strong, and these organizations provide essential care that is hard to find elsewhere in southern Berkshire County.

"I am so pleased that both VIM and CHP are being awarded this money. It is obvious that without these organizations a great deal of our residents wouldn't be able to get the proper dental care they need. I can't say enough about the wonderful work these folks do, and I sincerely appreciate the support they have received from the Massachusetts Dental Society," said Pignatelli.

The Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) is a 5,000-member professional association and statewide constituent of the American Dental Association. Established in 1864, the MDS is an organization dedicated to improving the oral health of the public in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and also advancing the professional development of its membership through initiatives in education, advocacy, and promotion of the highest professional standards.

ॐ

Glynis Marsh

Logs at de end of Harmon Road.

Sandisfield Town Web Site Launched

Sandisfield is the latest of the Berkshire County towns to develop a web site for its residents, http://www.Sandisfield.info. Populated with useful information, forms, and official documents, the site is the work of Sandisfield resident and technology consultant Jean Atwater-Williams, web developer Scott Lamlein of North Forty Road Web Design, and town officials Elaine O'Brien (retired Selectman), Patrick Barrett (Selectman), and Dolores Harasyko (Town Clerk). Many months of work have paid off in an easily navigable site featuring town government contact information, upcoming events, links and a downloadable copy of the Town's bylaws.

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Calendar

Every Monday except holidays: Select Board meeting, 7 pm, Town Hall.

Thursday, March 3: Special Town Meeting to vote on joining regional cooperative for high-speed internet service, 7 pm, Monterey Firehouse. See p. 5.

Saturday, March 5:

Rabies Clinic for cats & dogs 1:00–2:30 pm, Monterey Firehouse. Fee $10/shot.

Republican Town Caucus, 1:30 pm, Monterey Church basement; preceded at 1 pm by Town Republican Committee members meeting.

Thursday, March 10:

"The Modern Middle East," lecture by Williams College professor Magnus Bernhardsson, 7 pm, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington. See p. 17.

Free Blood Pressure Clinic with Berkshire Visiting Nurse Assoc., Town Hall Meeting Room, 2–3 pm.

Saturday, March 12: Lecture by Dan Levinson, "Local Action Leveraging Capacity for Change: The Story of Westport Green Village Initiative," 7:30 pm, First Congregational Church, Main St., Great Barrington. Sponsored by Community Land Trust in Southern Berkshires. $5 or 5 BerkShares.

Wednesday, March 16: Community Potluck Dinner, 6 pm, Monterey Meetinghouse Fellowship Hall. Dr. Andrew Cort will speak on finding meaning in life. See p. 10.

Thursday, March 17–Sunday, March 20: *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, Thomas A. Consolati Performing Arts Center, Sheffield, Ths.–Fri. 7 pm; Sat.–Sun. 2 and 7 pm. See p. 21.

Saturday, March 19: Book-Looks for Preschoolers with Libby Wolf, 10 am, Monterey Library.

Saturday, March 26: Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 pm, Dewey Hall, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel, caller Peter Stix. All dances are taught; beginners and children are welcome. Adults $8–10, children $5. Information 528-9385.

Contributors

We thank the following folks for their recent contributions. Your support encourages us and makes it possible for us to continue publishing our community paper.

Eileen Clawson
Rena Gill
Richard & Louise Skolnik

The Observer
January 26 – February 25

High temp. (2/18)	56°
Low temp. (2/11)	-10°
Avg. high temp.	30.5°
Avg. low temp.	8.3°
Avg. temp.	19.4°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	4.49 in.
Snowfall	34.5 in.

Precipitation occurred on 21 days.
Season snowfall total to date.... 133.2 in.

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be left in the drop box on the loading dock of the General Store. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4347 or e-mail montereynews9@gmail.com.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Maureen Banner, p. 8, George Emmons, p. 16; Tristian Goik, p. 15; Bonner McAllester, p. 14.

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